

# Behind the Star

Alexandria Sheriff's Office Quarterly Newsletter  
Second Quarter 2012



## Sheriff's Office, NOVA Partner to Educate Inmates

In June, the Alexandria Sheriff's Office and Northern Virginia Community College (NOVA) launched "Open Roads to Education," a pioneer program giving inmates the opportunity to take college courses inside the Detention Center with a NOVA professor. Mayor William D. Euille joined Sheriff Dana Lawhorne and Dr. Jim McClellan, Dean of the Liberal Arts Division for Alexandria, at the ribbon-cutting ceremony outside the Detention Center on June 28, the first day of class. Sheriff Lawhorne, Dr. McClellan and other officials then addressed the students at a brief reception in the jail cafeteria.

Dr. McClellan explained that historically very few people had access to formal schooling and higher education but the community college system was developed to give more people the opportunity to attend college. He told the students, "It is our goal to make sure everyone has access to higher education."

Sheriff Lawhorne, who received his Associate's Degree from NOVA in May, welcomed the students to the course and encouraged them to continue pursuing their education. He drew upon his own personal experience of starting college in the 1970s but stopping before completing his degree. He explained that he always felt as though it "kept him back a little bit" so more than 30 years after he first started, he decided to finish his degree. He then told the students to not let anything keep them from finishing their education.

Fifteen students enrolled in the one-credit course on African American history, attending class twice a week for six weeks. Additional courses are expected to be offered in the fall.

## GED Graduation

Congratulations to Walter Castro-Reyes (below) who passed his General Education Development examination! At a graduation ceremony on May 3, Sheriff Dana Lawhorne presented him with a Certificate of Achievement. Three other inmates also earned their GEDs this spring.







## Message from the Sheriff

The Sheriff's Office continues to serve Alexandria in effective and innovative ways. Please read about our response to the devastating June 29 storm. The Derecho caused a critical disruption in phone communications but the Sheriff's Office deployed deputies, equipped with public safety radios, throughout the City to provide a vital link between those at risk and staff in the Emergency Operations Center who could send help.

A recent Sheriff's Office accomplishment has special meaning to me. I've been committed to giving inmates every opportunity to improve their chances after release and educational opportunities are a priority. So in June, the Sheriff's Office and Northern Virginia Community College officially launched Open Roads to Education, a partnership that allows inmates to take college credit courses taught by NOVA professors who hold class in the Detention Center. Just a month earlier, 35 years I first started college, I completed my associate degree at NOVA. Through NOVA and now through our Open Roads program, anyone who wants to pursue educational goals can.

We're now on Facebook and Twitter so you can keep up on other news by liking us at [facebook.com/alexandriavasheriff](https://facebook.com/alexandriavasheriff) or following us at @alexvasheriff. Please stay connected!

*James Paulsme*

## Sheriff's Office Responds Quickly to Derecho

The June 29 storm was especially devastating because so many residents were left without power as temperatures continued to hover around 100 degrees. The City's swift response included activation of the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) where the Sheriff's Office was able to provide staffing and communication resources. But even before the storm was over, deputies went into action, responding to calls for service.

Deputies working with Alexandria police officers on a DWI enforcement detail were pulled to handle calls. They were joined by three deputies who had been working in the Detention Center but were needed on the streets to identify and address uncontrolled intersections, assess damage and danger posed by downed trees and power lines, and support routine calls for service.

The next morning in the EOC, it was apparent that communication was a critical issue because both mobile and landline phones had been impacted. With temperatures rising, public health officials feared that the most vulnerable may be unable to summon help. The Sheriff's Office deployed deputies to four assisted living and senior facilities without power so that they could monitor those at risk and immediately request help via public safety radio if necessary.

Deputies directed traffic and put up intersection control signs. To help identify

potential cooling centers, deputies visited recreation centers throughout the City to determine if they had power and could be opened to the public. In two cases, deputies provided a vital link between those at risk and emergency resources.



Chief Deputy Lenny George (above) was detailed to Alexandria Hospital to be a liaison to the EOC in case the hospital lost power, and when residents with ambulatory limitations in a high-rise apartment building without power requested help, Sergeant Doug Woehlke and Deputy Dexter Mason walked up 16 floors to offer assistance and monitor their conditions, later evacuating one resident.

Sheriff's Office commanders remained in the EOC throughout the weekend to identify and direct resources, and during the week, deputies continued working in the community, providing increased security in neighborhoods without power and assisting with traffic control.







## K-9 Team Finishes Second in Nation

The Sheriff's Office K-9 team took second place overall in explosives detection at a national competition this spring. Deputy John O'Hara and his partner Sherman, a six-year-old Labrador retriever, competed at the United States Police Canine Association's National Detector Dog Field Trial held May 20 through May 23, in Lakeland, Fla.

Deputy O'Hara and Sherman were among 80 K-9 teams from across the country that competed in explosives or narcotics searches. The explosives trials consisted of an odor recognition test and then searches of three areas each worth 100 points – an indoor search with explosives hidden in two of three rooms, a search of 15 packages of which two boxes contained explosives, and an outdoor search of five vehicles with two holding hidden explosives.

Deputy O'Hara and Sherman scored 293.01 out of a possible 300 points, finishing in second place overall among explosives teams

and just behind the first place team from the Department of Energy that scored 293.34.

Specifically, Deputy O'Hara and Sherman, after first passing the odor recognition test, finished in sixth place in the indoor search with a score of 95 out of 100, first place in the package search with a 99.34 score, and second place in the outdoor search with a score of 98.67. The Alexandria Sheriff's Office team also partnered with a team from Arlington County Police for a combined second place finish in a team category.

Deputy O'Hara and Sherman finished first in two USPCA regional competitions in the Washington, D.C., area in 2010 and 2011. In their regular duties, the team investigates suspicious packages, conducts safety sweeps of the Courthouse, Detention Center and other public buildings, and attends community events where they demonstrate training and detection techniques. They have been working together since 2007.

## Inmate Work Detail Saves City Money

Last fall, the City faced the challenge of removing office furniture from the Police Department's former quarters, making it available to other City departments and then removing the older furniture from those offices.

The vacant first floor space at 2003 Mill Road became the storage area for surplus furniture and by the time the shuffling of desks, chairs, work stations and file cabinets was complete, the space was filled with tons of old office furniture. Some could be resold but much had to be disposed of. In January, deputies arranged for the Inmate Work Detail to fill dumpsters with excess furniture which could then be recycled or sold for scrap.

Several City agencies, including Finance, General Services, Sheriff, Police, and Transportation and Environmental Services worked together to come up with this solution that saved conservatively at least \$100,000. This plan also allowed furniture to be reused and saved the expense of rental space.

On April 17, Finance held a small reception at City Hall and Chief Financial Officer Laura Triggs presented certificates of appreciation to City staff involved in this effort, including Sergeant Rawle Kelly, Deputy James Velez and Deputy George Wooden.







## New Crisis Intervention Team Members

Congratulations to Deputies Shawn Buker, Richard Hagar, Lisa James, Derrick Ramsey, John Triplett and Valarie Wright! In June, they became members of the multi-agency Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) after completing a week of training on skills like suicide intervention and verbal de-escalation techniques, as well as legal training in mental health and substance abuse. CIT was developed to divert persons with mental illness or substance use disorders away from the criminal justice system and into the treatment system, helping them live law-abiding and productive lives.

## Look-Alike Weapons

To raise awareness of the dangers posed by look-alike or replica weapons, the Northern Virginia police chiefs and sheriffs held a press conference in Fairfax City on June 29. Chief Deputy Tim Gleeson represented the Sheriff's Office at the event which highlighted how some "toy" guns are nearly identical to real firearms and that first responders and civilians may not be able to tell the difference in an emergency situation.



# Honoring Correctional Officers & Police Weeks

The Sheriff's Office commemorated National Correctional Officers Week (May 6-12) and National Police Week (May 13-19) by participating in memorial services and providing outreach to families of fallen officers.



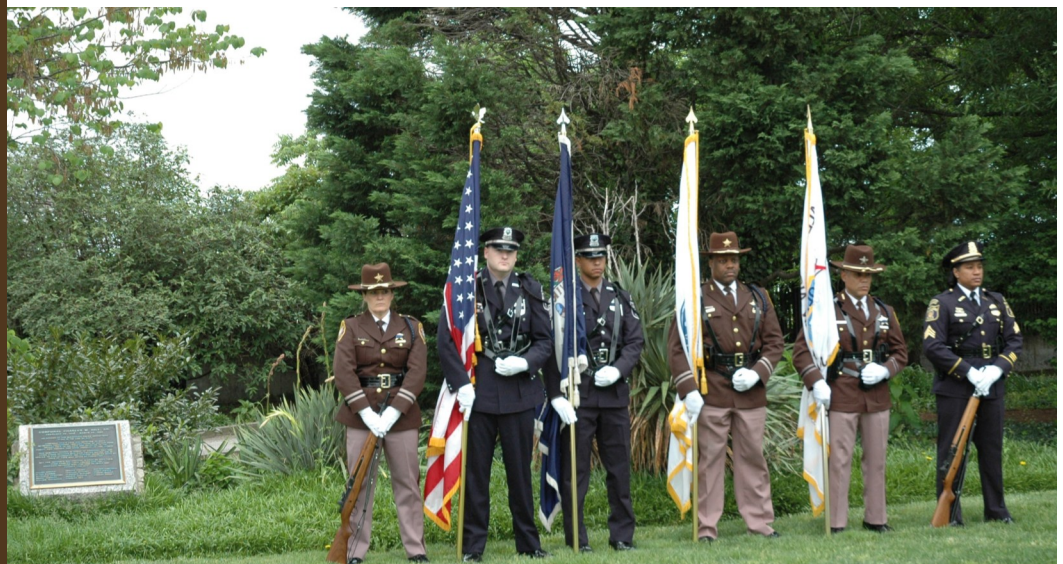
On May 5, the Corrections Chiefs Committee of the Metropolitan Council of Governments hosted a wreath laying ceremony (above) at the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial in Washington, D.C. Captain Frank Milano, Chair of the Corrections Chiefs Committee, served as master of ceremonies, and Sheriff Lawhorne, other staff members and the Honor Guard also attended.

On May 8, the Sheriff's Office, Alexandria Police Department and Alexandria Retired

Police, Fire and Sheriff Association (ARPFSA) held a wreath laying ceremony at the memorial marker at Waterfront Park in Old Town (bottom of the page). A combined honor guard of deputy sheriffs and police officers presented the colors and Sheriff Lawhorne, Deputy Police Chief Cleveland Spruill and retired Police Captain Ken Howard placed the wreath in memory of Alexandria's fallen.

Then on May 10, the three groups participated in the annual Alexandria Police and Sheriff Memorial Service at First Baptist Church. The names of Alexandria's fallen law enforcement officers – 18 police officers and one deputy sheriff – known to have died in the line of duty were called and each remembered with the toll of a bell. The U.S. Marshals Pipes and Drums performed during and after the service.

Throughout Police Week, deputies volunteered to provide support to visiting families and colleagues of fallen officers who were attending the Concerns of Police Survivors conference in the West End. Deputies transported survivors, ran errands, and offered compassion and sympathy to those who wanted to talk. Those who volunteered were inspired by the visitors they met and are eager to help again next spring.





# Chamber of Commerce Presents Valor Awards

On April 26, the Alexandria Chamber of Commerce honored the bravery and life-saving actions of Alexandria's public safety employees, including five members of the Sheriff's Office, at the 26th annual Valor Awards.



On October 27, 2011, Human Resources Manager George Bernard Baldwin (above) was heading south on Indian Head Highway when he observed a sedan traveling in the opposite direction go out of control. It swerved across the median into oncoming traffic, colliding at high speed with several other vehicles. Once traffic had stopped and it was safe to get out of his vehicle, Mr. Baldwin instructed a nearby driver to call 911 as he ran toward the severely damaged cars. The sedan was on fire, and the driver appeared to be trapped inside. Recognizing the volatile conditions, Mr. Baldwin enlisted others to help remove the driver from the smoking car. Together, they carried the driver off the road to a safe distance from the accident scene. He then assessed the condition of others in the crash and determined that all were stable enough to wait for assistance to arrive. He briefed the first responders before leaving the scene. Mr. Baldwin received a Lifesaving Award for his prompt, thorough and brave actions.

On December 31, 2011, as he passed an occupied cell on the medical ward at the Detention Center, Deputy Joseph Runquist noticed an inmate completely covered in blankets. All Deputy Runquist could see were



Photos courtesy Alexandria Police Department

the inmate's hands, which appeared to be reaching up out of the blankets and twisting as if to tighten something. It looked as though the inmate was attempting suicide using a sheet tied to the bedframe. He summoned assistance from Deputy Brian Mauck and Deputy William T. Morgan and together, they entered the cell and quickly crossed the floor to the bed. Deputy Mauck shouted the inmate's name and shook the bed, attempting to elicit a response but there was none so he so he pulled down the blankets. Indeed, the inmate was attempting to asphyxiate herself by tightening a sheet around her neck. They summoned additional assistance and immediately removed the sheet so she could breathe. When medical help arrived, her condition stabilized and she suffered no lingering injury. Due to the deputies' fast actions and observations, the inmate recovered. All three (above) received Lifesaving awards.

Along with firefighters who took heroic measures when flash floods created deadly conditions, Sheriff Dana Lawhorne was honored for his actions on September 8, 2011. Sheriff Lawhorne was monitoring the emergency radio at his home and upon hearing of Holmes Run rising in the Eisenhower Valley, the Sheriff went to Mill Road and Eisenhower Avenue where police officers were monitoring the situation. Several people were stranded and rapidly

rising water rushed through the parking lot. While some cars managed to exit, others became trapped. Sheriff Lawhorne and officers pushed a car out of the way so that others could exit. Twice he observed people trapped in their cars as their vehicles began to float away. He kept the vehicles in sight, even when one drifted away from the fire rescue team. That driver made his way to safety but another driver floated out of sight. Sheriff Lawhorne followed the path of the car, positioning himself in the median on a mound of grass where he used a road sign to maintain his stability in the water. He caught sight of the car, instructed the driver to remain inside and radioed for help. The water rose to waist level, but the Sheriff stayed with the driver, calming him until help arrived 15 minutes later. The Sheriff received a Bronze medal for his bravery and because he was attending a legislative conference in Tidewater, his daughter Megan (below) accepted it on his behalf.





## Alexandria Sheriff's Office:



Congratulations to the Lions of Lyles-Crouch Traditional Academy who were promoted to middle school! Sheriff Dana Lawhorne was honored to be a guest speaker at the June 19 promotion ceremony and he emphasized the importance of education and the role of the community in encouraging student success.



As part of "Spring for Alexandria," a 20-member team from the Sheriff's Office volunteered to clean up a park in the West End. On May 4, the Helping Hands team headed up by Sergeant Melissa Josiah helped beautify Dora Kelley Nature Park by collecting litter, spreading wood chips along footpaths, and planting new flowers.



# In Touch With Our Community



Deputies, officers and civilians from the Sheriff's Office and Police Department teamed up for the Law Enforcement Torch Run in June to benefit the Special Olympics.



The Inmate Work Detail continues to mow and maintain approximately 40 small City parks, collect trash in Hume Springs and along Four Mile Run, and move boxes and equipment for City agencies, saving tax dollars for all.



In April Community Relations Deputy Valarie Wright escorted the Easter Bunny (portrayed by Winchester Sheriff Lenny Millholland) to Inova Alexandria Hospital where they gave away stuffed toys and candy. In June Deputy Wright attended the AAA School Safety Patrols awards luncheon where William Ramsay student Mysha Kader was honored as Alexandria's top Safety Patrol.





## Veteran Retires

Congratulations to Lieutenant Tom Dumproff who retired in June following 26 years of service, most recently as the Watch Commander for Team 2A in the Detention Center. His colleagues held a celebration for him at Mango Mike's.



## New Sergeant

Sheriff Dana Lawhorne announced the promotion of Deputy Sheriff III Waraphan Srikongyos to the rank of Sergeant, effective June 9. Sergeant Srikongyos, known in the Sheriff's Office as "Sergeant Sky," holds a BS from Strayer University in Business Administration. He joined the Sheriff's Office in 1994, and has spent his entire career in the Security Division.



## Five Deputies Graduate from Academy

### Son of Fallen Deputy among Criminal Justice Academy Grads

On June 27, five new deputies graduated from the Session 126 of the Northern Virginia Criminal Justice Training Academy. The graduation ceremony, held at Dominion High School in Sterling, followed nearly six months of deputy and law enforcement training, including emergency vehicle operation, firearms training, defensive tactics, jail and courthouse procedures, crash investigation, basic legal training and other important areas.

The graduating deputies were (below, left to right) Jill Staub, Taneshia Dublin, Damaris Maravilla, Clarkton White and Kevin Truesdale. Deputy Truesdale is the son of fallen Deputy William G. Truesdale who was killed in the line of duty while escorting a prisoner in 1981.

Local television stations covered the graduation and speakers recognized the



significance of Kevin Truesdale's accomplishments with thoughtful words. His classmates cheered as his mother, widow of Deputy William Truesdale, presented him with his diploma.

A month earlier, during National Police Week, Session 126 paid tribute to Deputy Truesdale's memory in a special ceremony at the Academy that honored other graduates who made the ultimate sacrifice.





## T.C. Williams Senior Experience

Three members of the T.C. Williams Class of 2012 spent their Senior Experience at the Sheriff's Office. From May 21 through June 8, Amin Kassim, Nathan Ribyat and Andrew Swersky learned about Sheriff's Office operations, from court security to detention center functions to new deputy training.

They visited the Northern Virginia Criminal Justice Training Academy in Ashburn, the Emergency Vehicle Operations Center in Nokesville, and the Charles W. Hill firearms training facility on Eisenhower Avenue. Through hands-on activities, all three learned about basic defensive tactics, use of force, firearms



safety, and restraint techniques, like handcuffing (above).

At the end of their time at the Sheriff's Office, these Titans received certificates at a graduation ceremony.

## Inmates Perform in Talent Show

This spring, Detention Center inmates were treated to special live entertainment in the gymnasium — all thanks to their fellow inmates!

On April 19 and again on May 31, inmates performed in talent shows and demonstrated their creativity through singing, playing instruments and reading original poetry.

Most vocalists performed solo over pre-recorded music but a few were accompanied by live instruments like a guitar and keyboard that staff provided. Others shared spoken word poetry that reflected challenges the performers had experienced.

The shows concluded with all the performers singing in an ensemble finale that drew cheers from other inmates as well as staff.



## Human Rights Commission

On April 17, Sheriff Dana Lawhorne and members of his command staff met with the Human Rights Commission at City Hall. The Sheriff's Office meets with the HRC annually to present information on training, diversity awareness, inmates' rights, and investigation into complaints. Sheriff Lawhorne explained that the Office is not only committed to the preservation of human rights but also embraces new opportunities to increase awareness and expand protection for those in its custody, as well as members of the public and its own employees. All staff receive mandatory training on cultural diversity and on dealing with the mental health needs of those in its custody.

## Welcoming a VIP Guest

On May 8, the Sheriff's Office welcomed Khaled Huneifat, the mayor of Tafilah, Jordan. His visit was part of a formal tour organized by the International Republican Institute to learn more about best practices in local government. Chief Deputy Lenny George and Commander Mondre' Kornegay welcomed the opportunity to show Mayor Huneifat the functions of the Sheriff's Office.





# Employee Awards

On May 15, the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 609 honored Sergeant Candra Callicott (right with Sheriff Dana Lawhorne) with a certificate of appreciation as their Deputy of the Year at a ceremony during National Police Week. Sergeant Callicott was recognized for overseeing multiple long-term administrative and technical projects and taking them to successful conclusions, as well as for her continued excellence in her regular assignments.

At a ceremony at City Hall on May 17, the Alexandria Jaycees recognized the accomplishments of several City employees and presented them with awards at the annual Community Appreciation Night. LaTanya Ervin,



an Inmate Classification Manager in Support Services, received the 2012 William G. Truesdale Award for her outstanding performance, her leadership and dedication to her staff. Ms. Ervin (above with Chief Deputy Tony DiCesare) also volunteers as a mentor as part of a City-wide program for elementary-aged children.

On May 17, the Alexandria Bar Association presented Deputy Walt Travers (right) with the Liberty Bell Award at its annual awards dinner at the American Legion Hall. This award honors the non-lawyer who gives outstanding community service which enhances the legal profession and promotes a better



understanding of the rule of law. According to the bar association's executive directors, Deputy Travers is responsible for providing security for their meetings but also assists in other ways to ensure that their events, like Beat the Odds programs, judicial investitures, and Pro Bono receptions, go smoothly and that the courtrooms are rearranged properly for court the next morning. Circuit Court administrator Diane Fiske added that Deputy Travers is dependable, courteous and always willing to help their staff.



Photo courtesy Alexandria Bar Association

## Office Welcomes New Staff

The Sheriff's Office welcomed eight new Deputy Sheriffs to its team during the second quarter.

Fellman Cabero, June 9  
Darold Feldman, June 9  
Shana Jackson, June 9  
Michael Jennings, June 9  
Keith Scott, May 11  
Alex Siles, June 9  
Tierra Somerville, June 9  
Curran Thorne, June 9

They completed New Employee Training in June.

## In Memory

Retired Deputy Sheriff Gregory M. Kimble died on June 18. He served from 1981 to 2008.



## CREDITS

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